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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/406,575	09/24/1999	THOMAS J. BACHINSKI	293/008-CONT	1763
7590	02/13/2004		EXAMINER	
ROBERT R JACKSON FISH & NEAVE 1251 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS NEW YORK, NY 10020			PREBILIC, PAUL B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3738	
DATE MAILED: 02/13/2004				

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/406,575	BACHINSKI ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Paul B. Prebilic	3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 25-147 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 25,27-43 and 95-143 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 26,44-94 and 144-147 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 22,23.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on September 3, 2003 has been entered. In addition, the December 5, 2003 amendment has been entered.

Election/Restrictions

Claims 25, 27-43, and 95-143 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected inventions, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse by original presentation.

Claim Objections

Claims 46-52 and 65-75 are objected to as having the same scope. In particular, each of claims 46-52 have a scope that is identical to each other. In addition, claim 69-72 have the same scope. Finally, claims 73-75 have identical scopes. If these claims are allowed, Applicant will be required to cancel all but one of the duplicate claims of each set.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 26, 44-94, and 144-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claims 26 and 44-94, the phrase "cylinder-like" renders the claim scopes indefinite because it is unclear what falls within the claim scope due to the modifier "like"; see MPEP 2173.05(b), section F, which is incorporated herein by reference thereto.

With regard to claims 144-147, the terminology of the claim is inconsistent with the specification such that the claim language is considered unclear lacking clear antecedent basis. In particular, the language "clip segments" and "twistable resilient segments" lacks clear antecedent basis from the specification and is inconsistent therewith; see MPEP 2173.03 which is incorporated herein by reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States

only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 26 76-87, 89-94, and 144-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kaster (US 5,234,447). Kaster anticipates the claim language where the cylindrical-like body as claimed is met by the connecting unit (46), the twisting joints are the joints in the engaging members (44) adjacent connecting unit (46) that bend to allow the engaging members (44) to twist about the connecting unit; see Figures 10 and 19 and column 4, line 16 to column 7, line 14.

Claims 26 44-78, 80, 83-85, 87-94, and 144-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Goldsteen et al (US 5,976,178) or Goldsteen et al (US 6,206,912). Both Goldsteen patents have identical disclosures and anticipate the claimed invention where the cylindrical-like body as claimed is ring (430a) of Goldsteen, the spikes or clips as claimed are barbs (436") of Goldsteen, and the twisting joints or segments as claimed are at the bases of barbs (436"); see Figures 34, 35, and 38 as

well as column 16, line 60 to column 17, line 36 and column 18, line 37 to column 19, line 25.

With regard to claim 44 specifically, the expansion of ring (430a) inherently results in spike engagement because the same structure as disclosed in the present application is present in the Goldsteen patents as well.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed December 5, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With regard to the argument that claims 144-147 have support from the disclosure, the Examiner has modified the rejection to better explain the problems with the claim language. In particular, it is unclear what elements are being referred to by certain terms such that one reading the claims would not be sure what elements of the disclosed invention are being set forth.

With regard to the arguments that the terminology "cylindrical-like" is definite, the Examiner disagrees and has modified the rejection to better point out why this language is indefinite. For this reason, the Examiner maintains that the terminology is indefinite.

Applicant's arguments with respect to the active claims with respect to the prior art have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant should specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure, including the claims (MPEP 714.02 and 2163.06). Due to the procedure outlined in MPEP 2163.06 for interpreting claims, it is noted that other art may be applicable under 35 USC 102 or 35 USC 103(a) once the aforementioned issue(s) is/are addressed.

Applicant is respectfully requested to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter to the present claims. A copy of such copending claims is respectfully requested in response to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Prebilic whose telephone number is (703) 308-2905. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 3700 receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.



Paul Prebilic
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738